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November/December 2006

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Save the Date!

2007 SPS Users Conference
Feb. 26 – Mar. 2, 2007
Mark your calendars now!

Tips & Tricks: FPDS-NG – CARS and DODAACS



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Recently, we have been experiencing a series of problems that are associated with validations that run in FPDS-NG to ensure there is a match between User IDs, Contracting Office Codes (DODAACS) and Contract Numbers.

To help when you encounter these issues, let's review a few basics regarding the role DODAACS play in the entire FPDS-NG validation process. Understanding these relationships should provide insight into current problems and minimize the need for future troubleshooting.

- First, remember that, in FPDS-NG, Contracting Offices are identified by the six-character Department of Defense Address Activity Code (DODAAC).
- To use FPDS-NG, you must have an FPDS-NG user ID, which is separate and distinct from your PD2 user ID.

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Ask the Editor

Dear Readers,

Part of our role at the SPS-JPMO is to ensure that SPS Users have access to the information and training they need to effectively implement the SPS software, and achieve the best results possible. As a part of that effort, the JPMO is responsible for the operation of the SPS Help Desk, posting information and instructions on the Knowledge Base and Center of Excellence websites, providing "Tips & Tricks" to users through this newsletter, and hosting conferences and roadshows to bring hands-on training and experience directly to users.

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Date/Location:
December 12—15, 2006
California, MD

Mission-Focused Contracting for the Professional Within the Federal Government

Date/Location:
December 4—15, 2006
Washington, DC

Performance Based Service Acquisition

Date/Location:
December 12—14, 2006
Panama City, FL

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One of the most significant developments in the agreement is the design and deployment of the SPS Process Performance and Learning Tool ([PPLT](#)). The PPLT concept integrates formal learning assets and other resources into comprehensive job performance tools that not only support completing a specific task or process, but also provide training for the user as a secondary outcome.

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Announcement: Army SPS Representatives Transition to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Policy and Procurement



Effective 1 October 2006, the Army's representatives to the SPS Joint Program Management Office (JPMO) and the DoD

Contracting and Procurement In-Process Team (CAPI), have transitioned from the Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Agency, to the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Policy and Procurement (DASA(P&P)). Ms. Stephanie Mullen (Army CMO), Mr. George M. Chavis, Sr., (Army Desk Officer), and Mr. Kevin Doyle (JRB Representative and Increment 3 Planning Coordinator) are now staff members of the DASA(P&P) Business Operations and Enterprise Systems Directorate. Our duties have not changed and we will continue to provide you with full service support to the Army's implementation and sustainment of the Standard Procurement System.

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Inside the SPS-JPMO

Linda Beckner, Director, Integrated Products and Training Division



Ever wonder how the SPS-JPMO receives input from the thousands of SPS Users and integrates that feedback into the SPS product? This month, we're taking you Inside the SPS-JPMO to meet the person responsible for navigating the maze of user feedback and training needs...

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Change is coming! The SPS Connection will soon be getting a facelift. [Send us](#) your suggestions for improvements. Thanks to everyone who participated in our recent logo survey! Your input is helping to guide current branding efforts.

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Tips & Tricks: FPDS-NG – CARS and DODAACS



With the exception of a few Air Force sites that are not yet on PD2, nearly all SPS sites have transitioned to FPDS-NG for contract reporting. Recently, we have been experiencing a series of problems that are associated with validations that run in FPDS-NG to ensure there is a match between User IDs, Contracting Office Codes (DODAACS) and Contract Numbers.

To help when you encounter these issues, let's review a few basics regarding the role DODAACS play in the entire FPDS-NG validation process. Understanding these relationships should provide insight into current problems and minimize the need for future troubleshooting.

- First, remember that, in FPDS-NG, Contracting Offices are identified by the six-character Department of Defense Address Activity Code (DODAAC).
- To use FPDS-NG, you must have an FPDS-NG user ID, which is separate and distinct from your PD2 user ID.
- In PD2 it is possible to have several DODAACS associated with your PD2 user ID, which applies where a contracting specialist supports more than one buying activity. However, in FPDS-NG, there can be only one DODAAC per FPDS User ID. If a contract specialist reports for more than one contracting activity, they must have a separate FPDS-NG User ID for each activity that they will represent.
- When you create, edit, authenticate, or finalize a Contract Action Report (CAR), SPS checks the Issuing Office DODAAC for the action you are reporting, and sends the FPDS-NG User ID associated with your PD2 User ID for that DODAAC. If the CAR is for a Modification, the "Issued By" DODAAC on the SF30 modification will be sent. This information is stored in the FPDS-NG task in System Administration.
- If you do not have an FPDS-NG User ID for that DODAAC stored in the FPDS-NG task, you will receive a PD2 error message indicating that you have insufficient authority to access FPDS-NG. (**NOTE:** There is an existing SPS problem with sending the correct User ID for Delivery or Task Orders. Currently, the system is incorrectly sending the User ID associated to the Issuing Office DODAAC for the Basic Award rather than the Delivery or Task Order. If they are different, an "Insufficient Authority" error will be received from FPDS-NG. This issue will be corrected in a future FPDS Engine release; in the meantime, the workaround is to enter the FPDS-NG User ID created for the Order's Issuing Office DODAAC **in PD2 only** as the FPDS-NG User ID for the basic Award's Issuing Office DODAAC.)

- In FPDS-NG, when the CAR is created, edited, authenticated, or finalized, the FPDS-NG system compares the Contracting Office DODAAC on the CAR to the DODAAC that is associated with your specific FPDS-NG User ID. If the DODAACs do not match, an FPDS-NG error message is generated and will be displayed in an FPDS Engine message window.
- If you receive an "Insufficient Authority" error message from FPDS-NG, it may mean that your permissions in FPDS-NG are not sufficient for the action you are trying to take, or that the Contracting Office DODAAC being sent from PD2 does not match the DODAAC in FPDS-NG associated with your User ID.
- In addition, the Issuing Office DODAAC on the award must match the official "Contracting Office DODAAC" on file with FPDS-NG. If, for some reason, your DODAAC is missing from the FPDS-NG database or is present but with an expired "end date", you will most likely receive the following error message: "Error Code 404 – The value "*your DODAAC*" for Data Element 'Contracting Office ID' is invalid." Some sites have basic contracts with the obsolete "DODAAAN" or a non-standard DODAAC code. This situation would likely result in a failed validation and result in an error message. This would require contacting your FPDS-NG Core Representative to ensure that your Contracting Office is present and activated in the FPDS-NG Database.

All these checks and validations can be pretty confusing. To assist you with trouble shooting error messages, remember that until you see the "Connecting to FPDS-NG" window, any error messages that appear reflect a problem contained within PD2. Error messages received after establishing the connection with PD2 can be the result of a problem within PD2 or FPDS-NG.

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Ask the Editor

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To give you one more way in which to have your questions answered, we are implementing an "Ask the Editor" column in The SPS Connection. In each issue, we will answer questions on a wide range of topics, touching on current organizational events, current software development updates, as well as technical questions on issues you may be experiencing.

We invite you to share your questions with us in this forum. While we may not be able to answer every question here, you can be assured that your questions will be shared with those responsible for developing and maintaining the SPS program.

Please send your questions to spsinfo@pcicom.com. We will answer as many as we can, and we look forward to hearing from each and every one of you!

Sincerely,

The SPS-JPMO Team

Question:

I recently heard that the SPS program is being transferred to the Business Transformation Agency. What is the Business Transformation Agency and will there be any changes to the SPS program as a result of this change in management?

Answer:

The Business Transformation Agency (BTA) was created about one year ago by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, Gordon England. The purpose of BTA is to oversee all the joint business systems and processes within the Department of Defense to ensure that we have the most streamlined and efficient means of supporting our Warfighters and achieving accountability to our stakeholders and taxpayers. Underlying the mission of BTA is our goal to promote and reinforce an atmosphere of continuous improvement. In addition to overseeing SPS, the BTA also manages Wide Area Workflow, The Central Contractor Registration System, the Defense Travel System, DoD's implementation of FPDS-NG, and many other programs and help ensure that all such systems comply with a common "Business Enterprise Architecture", which will facilitate the ability for these systems to communicate with each other, share common data, and provide near-real-time information to support informed decision making at all levels in DoD.

BTA is reviewing all of the programs and will be focusing on SPS, the big picture in the very near future.

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Upcoming Events

Classes and events can do much to improve the way you work. Some upcoming informative programs include:

Leading in the Acquisition Environment

Date/Location: December 12—December 15, 2006/California, MD

Overview: Current and potential DoD acquisition leaders are given the foundation for leading up, down, and across the acquisition environment. Role play, simulation, communication, and similar activities drive the material home. In addition, a 360° feedback instrument prior to the course commencement will help tailor the class to student needs.

Information/Registration: <http://www.dau.mil>

Additional Benefit: 21 CLPs

Mission-Focused Contracting for the Contracting Professional Within the Federal Government

Date/Location: December 4—15, 2006/Washington, DC

Overview: This Level 1 course reviews the acquisition process beginning to end, from initial customer meeting through contract closeout. Students will learn skills such as leadership, decision-making, problem-solving, and negotiation. Case studies show real-world scenarios and issues.

Information/Registration: <http://www.managementconcepts.com>

Additional Benefit: 80 CPE credits

Performance Based Service Acquisition

Date/Location: December 12—14, 2006/Panama City, FL

Overview: FAR Part 37 and related mandates mean that those who must plan, award, and administer performance-based contracts have stringent regulations to follow. This class provides an overview of performance-based methods and how to determine when they are appropriate.

Information/Registration: <https://www.atrrs.army.mil>

Additional Benefit: 24 CLPs

SPS 2007 Users Conference – New Frontiers: Acquisition Redefined

Date/Location: February 26—March 2, 2007/Adam's Mark Hotel, Denver, CO

Overview: A conference to benefit DoD acquisition professionals across all services. Speakers, exhibitors, breakout sessions, and hands-on learning related to current and future SPS software and related products will make you more efficient and the DoD stronger.

Information/Registration: More information to come.

Additional Benefit: CEUs will be available. Keep checking The SPS Connection for updates and more information.

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One of the most significant developments in the agreement is the design and deployment of the SPS Process Performance and Learning Tool (PPLT). The PPLT concept integrates formal learning assets and other resources into comprehensive job performance tools that not only support completing a specific task or process, but also provide training for the user as a secondary outcome.

Other developments will span across the [AT&L Performance Learning Model \(PLM\)](#) to leverage existing resources and continue to provide the workforce community with the ability to “learn at the point of need.”

The goal is for this partnership to foster and promote mutual learning and job support development opportunities for contracting professionals within the Department of Defense.

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Call for Focus Group Volunteers!



Are you an SPS user? Do you have thoughts about SPS and what we can do to improve the system? Here's your chance to make your voice heard!

SPS-JPMO is looking for volunteers to participate in focus group sessions in the coming months. The sessions will be conducted by an outside communications firm, and will explore users' thoughts on the SPS software, the upcoming deployment of Increment 3, and what kinds of communication about SPS you would find most valuable.

We're asking you to participate in one, two-hour focus group session scheduled in your area. We hope to host between five and ten participants in each session. Your input and suggestions will remain anonymous and will not be attributable to you.

If you or your office is interested in participating, please contact Danielle Whelton at PCI Communications, at dwhelton@pcicom.com, or call 703-823-1600 x212.

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As of the end of November 2006, ALL Navy and Marine Corps should be using PD2 v4.2.2 SR07, which I believe is the first time every DoN users is on the same version/service release!

v4.2.3 (Increment 3) Software Acceptance Testing (SAT) Delayed

The SPS JPMO is moving the original test dates of 13 November-15 December to the right. No new dates have been established by the JPMO, but below is the criteria the JPMO has recommended to their leadership on when SAT should begin:

1. **Assurance Product Fixes Have Been Made**
2. **Assurance Integration Fixes Have Been Made**
3. **Data Migration Issues Addressed**
4. **Criteria for Deployment Analysis Has Been Established**

The above is consistent with the issues the Navy had raised with our leadership. The Navy and Marine Corps will continue to participate and support Increment 3 testing efforts, and in conjunction with the JPMO, the Business Transformation Agency (BTA) and the Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy Office will continue to push for the needed functionality and business case analysis we require for Increment 3 prior to any DoN deployments of this new software. SPAWAR Headquarters has been working feverishly to insure the Navy Test Environment for SPS is ready for SAT. Testing will be conducted at the JPMO Government Test Facility in Fairfax, VA and from a Navy test location in Mechanicsburg, PA. Ms. Rhonda Crow is the Navy Test Director and will provide more information about the schedule and testing events as they become available. (Rhonda.crow@navy.mil or 717 605-5723).

Metrics Reminder

Each month, sites using SPS in production are required to post their monthly SPS-metrics to the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy Acquisition Metrics Web site:
https://128.121.19.201/index_SPS.asp. In fiscal year 2006, the Navy completed over 225,000 actions in SPS obligating over \$35 BILLION DOLLARS in PD2!!!!

SPS Claimant Council Held on 18 October

The first SPS Claimant Council of the new fiscal year was held in the JPMO building on October 18th 2006. Presentations and action items have been posted to the Navy page of SPS JPMO COE for your review and information. We'll continue to hold this fact to face (and call in) meetings about every other month. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, January 10, 2007.

<http://www.spscoe.sps.eis.army.mil/spscoe/Navy/default.aspx>

Joint SPS Conference is coming! February 26 to March 2 in Denver, CO

Mark your 2007 calendars now for the JPMO sponsored SPS conference in Denver! Events begin on Monday with (optional) claimant meetings, followed on Tuesday by the General Session, Wednesday and Thursday will be breakout sessions/tracks. On Wednesday we have a Navy/USMC track set up. If you have any thoughts or requests for Navy/USMC specific sessions, or input on the overall conference agenda/break out sessions, please contact me or your DoN SPS user representative on the planning committee. Katie Kuehn from NAVFAC had graciously volunteered to assist with the conference planning and she can be reached at 847 688-2600 x103 or Katie.kuehn@navy.mil See you in Denver!!!

Sign Up for the bi-weekly PEO EIS PD2 Update

If you're interested and aren't receiving it already, I'll gladly add your email address to the bi-weekly PEO EIS PD2 email update I send out on "payday." It's a short email update of any of the goings on "inside the Beltway" related to SPS or other PEO EIS events of interest to SPS user community. The intent is to keep everyone informed and up to date.

- [Mr. Eric Ferraro](#), Navy/Marine Corps SPS Desk Officer

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to provide you with full service support to the Army's implementation and sustainment of the Standard Procurement System. Our contact information (telephone numbers and email addresses) remain unchanged.

Multiple Choice

In PD v4.2 Increment 2, users are limited to one Line of Accounting (LOA) per Line Item. Users cannot delete, nor correct the LOA; to make changes to a LOA, the funded amount must be zeroed out and a new informational Line Item created with the new LOA. This article explains how to create an Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contract format, and subsequent Delivery Orders, when multiple PRs need to be added to Delivery Orders. Below are the steps required to issue a Delivery Order using multiple PRs for the same priced contract line item number (CLIN):

- Create a new Delivery Order by highlighting the IDIQ Contract.
- Attach the PR in the Delivery Order matchmaker window to the Priced CLIN.
- After matching contract Line Item 0001 to the first PR Line Item, the Delivery Order window opens. Navigate to Line Items>DO/TO Match on the menu to add the next PR.
- After selecting the next PR to attach, match the PR to the same Priced CLIN.
- The system automatically creates the next available CLIN, which must be changed to an Info SubCLIN. Users will receive a message indicating that a CLIN is being created.
- Make the assigned CLIN an informational SubCLIN to the Priced CLIN. You must delete quantity and unit price before changing the CLIN Type from Priced to Info Only.
- Repeat the previous steps to add the third PR.

- Since the Unit Price pulls into the Delivery Order Line Item from the Contract Line Item, the Unit Price must be changed. Make sure the Unit Price includes the amounts of all the attached PRs for the same Priced CLIN. Based on the sample IDIQ CLIN structure, the Unit Price pulled over from the Delivery Order matchmaker screen was \$20,000,000.00, but would need to be changed to the total price of \$225,000.00 for the 3 PRs.
- The Funded amount for each PR would be appropriately applied in the Funding Sources window. Each PR would cite a different LOA in the funded amount of \$75,000,00.

This scenario is for the above CLIN structure, but many sites convert the dollars (lump sum) to the quantity since DFAS may only make one payment for a quantity of one. In that instance, the unit price would not need to be changed. What if your CLIN structure is Info CLIN with Priced SubCLINs? You should not have both Info and Priced SubCLINs on an Info CLIN. As it states in accordance with DFARS 204.7104-2(a): "Number subLine Items by adding either two numeric characters or two alpha characters to the basic contract Line Item number." This would require users to create additional Info CLINs unless the initial Info CLIN does not cite an LOA, and then that CLIN can be used to add a LOA. Cross-reference the Priced SubCLIN in the Description block of the Info CLIN to be used for the additional funding. The system looks at both the funding on the CLIN and SubCLIN(s) to support the price of a Line Item; therefore, you will receive a message indicating that the funds for the Line Item are insufficient if another Info CLIN had to be created. This is acceptable as long as the price and funding agree for the entire, fully funded contract."

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Inside the SPS-JPMO: Linda Beckner, Director, Integrated Products and Training Division



Ever wonder how the SPS-JPMO receives input from the thousands of SPS Users and integrates that feedback into the SPS product? This month, we're taking you Inside the SPS-JPMO to meet the person responsible for navigating the maze of user feedback and training needs: Linda Beckner, Director of the JPMO's Integrated Products and Training Division.

The Integrated Products and Training Division was recently formed by combining the JPMO's Training manager responsibilities with the Functional Division, the arm responsible for translating user needs into software

solutions. Now, with both groups reporting to her, Ms. Beckner is looking forward to the future, and utilizing the newly combined force to improve the user environment.

Vital Stats

Name: Linda Beckner

Title: Director, Integrated Products and Training Division

Time with SPS-JPMO: 11 and ½ years

Time with DoD: 32 and ½ years; Started with the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Diseases, Fort Detrick, Frederick, Maryland.

Connection: Ms. Beckner, thanks for speaking with us today. To start us off, could you give our readers an idea of what your role is at the JPMO?

Beckner: Sure. My role is to ensure that the stakeholders' requirements are executed in the software, as well as in the overall product suite, in order to enable contracting personnel to execute their mission in an efficient and effective fashion.

Connection: What is the role of the Integrated Products and Training Division in the overall implementation of the SPS software?

Beckner: Our role is to ensure that the suite conforms to regulatory requirements and that it provides necessary capabilities, while at the same time making it user-friendly.

We have contact with "Functional Representatives" from various sections of the overall user community. To complete the software, we involve these stakeholders in writing the requirements that the software must meet, then determining what the testing criteria for those requirements will be and how we will measure the success of the program in meeting those requirements. We then do any follow up necessary, in terms of determining and implementing any enhancements that need to occur.

In simple terms, we translate what the users need into language developers can understand for execution in the software.

Connection: We understand that the Training Manager and Functional Division responsibilities were recently combined to form the Integrated Products and Training

Division. What will this change mean for SPS users?

Beckner: We will have a more tightly coupled view of the training in concert with the SPS software and the other products that we have. We'll be able to more closely align training with actual stakeholder needs.

As we currently respond to inquiries from field users, we can use this avenue to review the issues coming into help desk, as well as those that arise through the Service Representatives in various forums – boards, working groups, etc. – on a regular basis. This constant stream of feedback allows members of our division to develop product demonstrations and prepare Tips and Tricks that will assist users with the actual problems that are occurring right now in the user community.

Our division also played a key role in the 2004 SPS Users Conference, and will take on that same role for the next conference, planned for 2007. These forums are opportunities for us to get in front of an audience of users and System Administrators so that we can give them hands-on training and face-to-face interaction that will help them achieve better results with regard to SPS in their daily job functions.

Connection: How do you see the Integrated Products and Training Division making an impact for users in the coming year?

Beckner: We are going to be able to have a more hands-on approach than in the past. We plan to offer greater outreach by doing Site Assistance Visits and by doing more global demonstrations to the different levels of the community. We intend to go directly to the folks who normally wouldn't necessarily have first-line access to the JPMO.

We are also working to bridge the gap between policy execution and information technology implementation. When the Defense Acquisition Regulations Council approves regulatory changes, we'll be able to tell users, "Here's how it will be implemented in SPS."

Connection: What new training opportunities will be available for SPS users?

Beckner: With Increment 3 being a web-based application, there will be an online portal available to access training and earn certificates, in addition to the more traditional videos and computer-based training. There will be much easier access to training opportunities, so that users can choose to learn when their schedules allow.

Connection: What are some of the things the Integrated Products and Training Division has in store for SPS Users at the upcoming conference?

Beckner: We are looking at providing more Tips & Tricks and How-To for PD2 users.

In addition, we will showcase the capabilities of Increment 3 and discuss functionalities that are completely new – such as the ability to archive closed-out contracts – as well as the ease of system administration, and our new approach to training. We also hope to talk about some of the processes that are easier in Increment 3 as compared to PD2 – enhanced search capability and ease of doing repetitive actions, such as concurrent modifications.

Connection: What will the role of the Integrated Products and Training Division be as SPS moves into Increment 3 deployment?

Beckner: Our role is shifting to one of "change agent" for acquisition business transformation, rather than facilitator for requirements of individual desktop users. We're getting away from looking at stovepipes, and looking more at capabilities within the Enterprise Transition Plan, looking at SPS within the portfolio of systems and what capabilities it offers and can offer. It will be more of a portfolio view of capabilities rather than individual systems.

This is a big change from our past philosophy; it is a paradigm shift, as users have, over the years, looked to SPS to solve a variety of problems that, perhaps, were beyond the scope of the system. For example, we are now looking at how an integration between SPS and Wide Area Workflow, as well as other systems, might solve a problem, rather than looking solely to SPS to incorporate new functionality. We're no longer saying, "What I want needs to be in my product," we're saying, "How can the problem be solved within the suite of products?"

Connection: What should users know that they don't currently?

Beckner: That we are here to serve them, and that they are always welcome to have an open dialogue with us through their Desk Officers. Each Service has a Desk officer who is co-located with the SPS Program Manager and thus has open access to relate user needs to the Program Office. We would like to work more closely with these representatives and any other user representatives the Services may have in place.

Connection: Is there any advice you would give to users either currently on Increment 2, or as they move onto Increment 3?

Beckner: My advice is that they get to know the functionality of Increment 3 as compared to Increment 2, and understand what things can be done faster and more efficiently using the new web-based software. There is a great deal of capability in Increment 3 that is brand new and hasn't yet been explored.

I would also recommend they talk to their Joint Requirements Board (JRB) members, because their JRB members were involved in the design of the detailed functional capabilities, and they included many tools to increase productivity. These include automated workload tools and enhanced search capabilities that will increase efficiency and expedite performance of repetitive business processes.

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